

Primitive Baptist Church of Shawnee Records (2006.66)
Date Span: 1924-1988

The records of the Primitive Baptist Church of Shawnee document several decades of the small congregation. The donor of the collection is a member of the congregation. The single series is minutes, present in ledgers and a notebook. The small frame church building is at 10921 W. 57th Terrace in Shawnee.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Source: Opal Marshall

Size: .5 linear foot

Access: Open

Processed by: Russ Czaplewski

Supervising Archivists: Russ Czaplewski and Kathy Daniels

ORGANIZATIONAL SKETCH

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1889 | Primitive Baptist Church founded ¹ ² and possibly built same year ³ |
| 1924 | Church Aid Club organized (May 28) |
| 1926 | Primitive Baptist Church of Shawnee incorporated (October 23) ⁴ |
| 1960s | Interior of the church mostly remodeled by longtime preacher Elder Nathaniel Word, who served the church for about 40 years until his death. ⁵ |
| 1986 | Ledger records 18 members—most with Kansas City, KS addresses; one in Shawnee, and one in De Soto (August 6) |
| 2006 | Congregation dwindled to 15 ⁶ |

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

¹ "Primitive Baptist Church a 95 Year Institution in Shawnee" *Shawnee Journal* June 13, 1984; legal description: Shawnee City, Lot 12, Block 14; address: 10921 W. 57th Terrace.

² Lot purchased for \$100 on September 9, 1889 by trustees of Primitive Baptist Church (John Davenport, Eli Ridley, Cornelius Bradley, John Brown and Bass Brown); Deed record vol. 59, p. 559. Johnson County Archives.

³ Rabas, Joyce "Shawnee Landmark Celebrates 105 Years as House of Worship" *Sun* July 6, 1994

⁴ Kansas Secretary of State business entity search; business entity ID number 1413533; incorporation was forfeited October 23, 1976

⁵ "Historic black church links worshippers to past" Bonner Springs, KS *The Chieftain* July 27, 2006

⁶ Ibid.

The records of the Primitive Baptist Church of Shawnee document several decades of the small congregation. The collection consists of one series: Minutes. A sizable gap in coverage exists between the ledgers: 1940-1965. There is overlap between some of the ledgers.

Sources documenting the first decades of the congregation are few. One statement: "In Shawnee blacks built the Shawnee Primitive Baptist Church, 57th Terrace and Reeder Street, in 1889. One block north was the all-black Dunbar School, which also housed the city's first library."⁷

The first ledger of the series contains the oldest records present, and records the organization of the Church Aid Club which first met on May 28, 1924. Originally the group met each Wednesday evening (frequency varied in by the 1930s). Dues were ten cents. The Club minutes mention fundraising efforts such as bazaars and quilt making as well as expenses and support of the minister. The Club had officers, president and secretary being the most commonly mentioned.

The second ledger records the minutes of church meetings, elections of officers, and included brief financial reports on the church treasury. That the congregation operated on very meager funds is obvious from the entries. Typical of the minutes is that of September 4, 1926—when the pastor was reelected pastor for another year, a clerk and assistant clerk, three trustees, and an assistant treasurer were elected. Occasionally the death of a member is noted, or as on April 6, 1929: "received for Baptism brother Robert McCallop."

The Shawnee church is part of the Big Creek Association of Regular Primitive Baptists, which includes churches in Tennessee, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois.⁸

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SERIES 1: MINUTES

Ledgers and notebook; 1924-1940, 1965-1988

FOLDER INVENTORY

Series 1: Minutes

Folder 1) Church Aid Club; May 28, 1924-February 1, 1934 [2006.066.001]

Folder 2) October 3, 1931-June 1, 1940 [2006.066.002]

Folder 3) April 1965-May 25, 1985 [2006.066.003]

Folder 4) May 25, 1985-February 25, 1989 [2006.066.004]

Folder 5) November 26, 1983-June 26, 1988. [2006.066.005]

Related:

⁷ "Black Families Recall Kansas Roots" *Kansas City Star* July 10, 1997

⁸ "Historic black church links worshippers to past" Bonner Springs, KS *The Chieftain* July 27, 2006

Digital video disc; footage of church service; November 26, 2006 [2007.002.012]